

MAKE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WORK

One of the biggest factors that ruin a relationship is the inability to face and handle conflicts. The absence of appropriate communication skills and the impact of unresolved issues from the past result in further deterioration of a relationship. A lot of married/committed couples feel the imbalance of power, resulting in an increase in the dissatisfaction level of either one or both partners. Some couples are forced to live under the same roof in a loveless marriage due to certain obligations. They tend to stay in the wedlock for a long time, till the relationship either becomes unbearable or starts affecting the children. Factors which affect a marriage negatively are lack of trust, respect, understanding and the absence of open communication. Amongst some couples the feeling of not being loved, understood, valued and appreciated leads to the relationship breaking up.

Men and women have dif-

WHEN GETTING INTO A RELATIONSHIP / MARRIAGE...

- ❖ Do both of us have same cultural and intellectual level?
- ❖ Any bad habits which can be detrimental to the relationship?
- ❖ Is my partner emotionally available to me?
- ❖ How does my partner respond to negative feedback?



Arrange your Love Marriage by author and counsellor **Meera Ravi** aims to understand the dynamics of a couple's relationship. She lists some pointers for readers to help them nurture their bonds

ferent characteristic traits and it is important to complement each other for a relationship to succeed. Also, some strengths and weaknesses are also a part of one's innate personality. A lot of women complain that their partners do not communicate appropriately (meaning listening, exploring, explaining, empathising or expressing) and conclude that their partners do not love them. But they forget that men and women react and think differently to a situation.

Amongst the essential qualities to make a relationship work are trust, respect, empathy, patience and open communication. The latter being an important aspect, because it helps not only the relationship to grow, but also the individual growth of the couple. However, each individual has different set of priorities and qualities and a lot of times what is important to one, may not be important to the other partner.

BUILDING A BOND

When falling in love, it is im-

portant to remember that it is an event. It is essential to initiate the process for someone who fits each other's personality and temperament. This will happen, only when the partners are aware of each other. To understand this, one needs to be absolutely clear of his / her strengths and weaknesses and then look for someone who can fall in step with this. It also helps to know what a person's expectations from the partner are and express them. This is needed for clarity. Taking stock of interests, hobbies, professional and personal commitments are other factors which help in building a strong bond.

Find out about the childhood of the person before committing to a relationship. Instead of 'spending time', 'invest' time with each other. This means asking important questions, finding out relevant information and going beyond knowing the other person. The key is to try and think more with the head and the heart. Also, don't marry hoping for big changes. If there is something

you don't like about the prospective partner, accept it or decide how you are going to deal with it right away.

Understanding that there are no perfectly matched couple is practical. Have realistic expectations from each other. In case of crisis in the relationship, despite seeking advice from friends and well-wishers, seek professional help if the problem persists. In case of a break up, do not get into a new relationship without performing an autopsy on their previous relationship.

- ❖ Have regular marriage check ups to see if you are growing in the relationship. In case it has been an unfulfilling run, instead of taking impulsive decision, explore the options you have.
- ❖ Do not compare yourself with other couple. Remember that what is visible may not be the real picture and that each individual and couple is exclusive, so comparison is unjustified.
- ❖ Don't expect your spouse to be your source of happiness, as personal happiness comes from within. Express your needs verbally.
- ❖ Always keep in mind that marriage / relationships are a work in progress and one needs to put in efforts to nurture it instead of taking it for granted.

-As Told To

IPSITA BASU DASGUPTA